

## Attack of the Judaizers coming soon to a Church near You!

By Terry Bostic

*"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers; beware of the concision." (Philippians 3:2)*

The headline for this article may sound like an advertisement for an old horror flick or low budget movie that is trying to draw attendance by sensationalism, but the strange truth is that this warning and threat is very real! This threat can come in a form of teaching that may be presented as newly revealed truths that have been given by revelation from God himself, as something that was lost but is now being restored to the Church or something that God has given us to make us wealthy and to somehow make us complete or whole as Christians. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!

In these last few years, there has been an increasing movement to add Jewish customs and holy days from the Old Testament Law to the New Testament Church. Those who push these ideals go from congregation to congregation teaching that the New Testament Church should be adopting these ways to please God. If we do, they say we will become more blessed, complete and mature as Christians. Oh, and by the way, this also gives them new ways to ask for more money and offerings (which strangely is the central theme or message of many modern day Judaizers.

Do any of these teachings have any validity or authority in the life of the believer today though? To know the answer to this question, let's take a close biblical look at three major Covenants that God made with man. First, God's promise to Abraham, called the Abrahamic Covenant, secondly the Covenant God made with the Jewish people, called the Old Covenant and lastly, God's Covenant made with His Son and all of those who would abide in Him, also called the New Covenant.

If we want to receive God's promises, both personally and together as one body, we need to understand God's purposes behind these Covenants and how they affect us today. Before we take an in-depth look at these Covenants though, let's go back to the beginning, the Garden of Eden and the fall of man.

### *Back to the Garden*

*We begin our biblical timeline with the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. Scripture says that Adam and Eve fell in the Garden. When this happened, mankind took on another nature, the works of the flesh. (Galatians 5:19-21) Adam and Eve's sin had separated them from God. Adam and Eve no longer reflected God's nature and character but instead began to reflect Satan's nature. God had given man dominion but when they believed the lies of Satan, they fell from that position of dominion and abdicated it to the devil who then became the god of this world. (II Corinthians 4:4) Little (g) or carnality became the norm for all of mankind. **Instead of God being the Father of man, the devil became the father of those who would follow after him. This is why at times Jesus would say to someone, "you are of your father the devil" or "get behind me Satan!"** (Matthew 16:23, Mark 8:33, John 8:44)*

*Jesus is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. God's plan this whole time has been to redeem mankind from the fall in the Garden, to deliver man from his corrupt nature and renew us with the nature of Christ. Jesus became the second Adam and succeeded where the first Adam failed. He came to redeem us back to God, change our nature and make the way for eternal peace and happiness by giving us eternal life. (Romans 5:12-21)*

## God's Covenant with Abraham

In order to understand the Covenant that God made with Abraham, we must go back to the original promise that God gave to Abraham and the contingency that was placed upon that promise.

"I will establish my covenant between me and thee and your seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant... (Genesis 17:7 KJV)

*We find the interpretation of who this seed is in the New Testament. Under divine inspiration, the Apostle Paul declared:*

**"The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ." (Galatians 3:16 NIV, Read also Genesis 17:7 KJV)**

*The specific language spoken by God to Abraham teaches us that the promises were not made directly to the descendants of Israel but to God's Son, Jesus Christ, who is declared in scripture as God's promised Seed. (Luke 1:55, 8:11, John 7:42, Romans 1:3, Galatians 3:19, II Timothy 2:8, Hebrews 2:16) The promise was not given to Israel through the Law but was given directly to Christ. Those who have put their faith in Christ have now become the recipients of these promises by becoming sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Paul taught this in his letters to the Church.*

**"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, THROUGH THE LAW, but THROUGH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." (Romans 4:13-14)**

Paul taught that even though the law was added later, this did not cancel God's original Covenant agreement with Abraham. He wrote:

**"What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his GRACE gave it to Abraham through a promise." (Galatians 3:17-18)**

God's word teaches us that the promise cannot be inherited through the lineage of being a natural descendent of Abraham (a Jew). (Romans 4:13-17, 9:6-8) The promise cannot be inherited by keeping the Law of Moses; it can only be inherited by becoming a spiritual descendant through regeneration and having faith in Christ. We do not receive all the promises of God through the Jewish bloodline, but through the bloodline of Jesus, who is the Promised Seed of Abraham. When we receive Jesus then we become Abraham's seed. The Apostle Paul explains:

*"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29)*

Thank God for His redeeming sacrifice!

### Why the Law?

What was the purpose of the law then? **The law was added because of sin!** There had to be a temporary system put into place until Christ, our perpetual sacrifice, could be revealed. The Law was to be a schoolmaster only until Christ came. The Law was essentially "put in charge" to lead those under it to Christ. Those who now have faith in Christ however no longer have to be under the supervision of the law because its purpose has come to an end. (Galatians 3:19-25)

The Old Covenant ended with the shedding of the blood of Christ. At the Last Supper the bread and the wine became the symbols of a new agreement and were instituted by the Son of God. (Matthew 25:26-28, Mark 14:22-24) On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb. (Mark 14:12) Jesus brought fulfillment to this day when He died upon the cross and became our true

Passover Lamb. Unlike Old Testament Israel, our sins were not temporarily covered by the blood of bulls and goats, but they are forever washed away by His perpetual sacrifice.

The law was just a shadow, type or forerunner that was meant to keep Israel under the schoolmaster of the law until Christ was revealed. Now that Christ has become the end of the law, we have now been brought back to the promises that God made to Abraham before the temporary system (of the law) was imposed. (*Hebrews 10:1, Romans 10:4, Galatians 3:15-18*)

### **Redeemed From the Law**

Again, the Law was only meant to be a temporary system until Christ could come. At Jesus' death there was also a tearing down of the "wall of partition," otherwise known as the Old Testament Law. The renting of the veil in the Temple at Jerusalem was a sign that the Lord had indeed destroyed the barrier that the Law had created between God and man. Under the Law, only the High Priest could come into the presence of God and then only once a year. The blood atonement of Christ changed all that and gave us access to our heavenly Father. (*Ephesians 2:14-18, Hebrews 10:19-21*)

We are not bound as slaves to the Law of Moses but are now sons of God and inheritors with Christ. It is important to know these vital truths:

The Law was against us. (*Colossians 2:13-14*)

The Law revealed our sin and guilt. (*Romans 7:7*)

The Law was to be kept through carnal ordinances. (*Hebrews 9:1-10*)

The power of sin is the Law. (*I Corinthians 15:56 NIV*)

The Law was temporary until Christ was revealed. (*Galatians 3:23-25*)

Christ redeemed us from the Law. (*Galatians 3:13-14*)

Christ is the end of the Law. (*Romans 10:4*)

Jesus has taken away the former (Old Covenant) to establish the latter (New Covenant). (*Hebrews 10:9*)

The Law was written on tables of stone, God now writes them in our hearts. (*Hebrews 8:8-10*)

Even today when the Law is read, there is blindness (lack of revelation of Christ) upon the people. (*II Corinthians 3:13-15*)

### **Jesus, the Lamb of God**

Remember that God loves the Jewish people but they need to accept redemption from Christ, the second Adam. He has become the Lamb of God, a perpetual sacrifice once and for all for everyone. Christ is after the order of Melchizedek. We see a change here as indicated by scripture! A change of the old law and Levitical priesthood (which was a shadow of things to come) changed by the Redeemer (Christ) who is the Lamb of God. His sinless life was freely given in our behalf to usher in the new and better Covenant. (*Hebrews 7:12, 17, 8:6, 10:5-10*)

The law was only a temporary system until Christ was revealed. There is no longer a priesthood of Levites, no 613 laws, no animal sacrifices, no new moons, holy days or Sabbaths in effect for today's Christians. All of these laws were kept in the power of the works of the flesh; they were not kept by faith. The Lord has provided a complete, redemptive and finished work. He has given us a new heart and spirit. He has written His laws in our new hearts. We hear him now because we are made alive with a new Spirit. (*Colossians 2:16-17, Galatians 4:8-11, Hebrews 10:1, Galatians 3:12, Ezekiel 18:31, 36:26, Hebrews 8:10*)

We are redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ, the second Adam. He repaired the breach between God and man that was caused by sin in the Garden of Eden and he paid the price for our fallen ways. We are now new creatures in Christ, a brand new creation. Seeing these things now let us remember that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (*Romans 14:23*) Without faith it is impossible to please God. (*Hebrews 11:6*) The law is not of faith. (*Galatians 3:12*) The law is a stumbling block now! It causes people to have a blind spot. The word says that even today when the Law of Moses is read, blindness comes on the reader. (*II Corinthians 3: 15*)

We could not keep the law and it was not for us but against us. (*Colossians 2:14*) The Lord said, "Take my yoke upon you for my burden is light and easy. (*Matthew 11:29-30*) He does not want us to take on the yoke of the law because its burden is not bearable. The law was something that man could not keep. To break one part of the law was to break all the law. (*James 2:10*) The Jews were not able to keep it and neither can we. (*Acts 15:6-11*)

Sin entered into the world through one man (Adam). Sin was taken away by one man, the second Adam who is Christ. He is our atonement. The law was added because of the first man's sin, the law was taken away through the second Adam. Christ is the end of the law for everyone that believes. (*Romans 10:4*) One man lived the law perfectly for us. One man took sin away from our lives through the redeeming blood and died in our place, He then brought an end to the temporary Jewish system called the Old Covenant.

Do not enter again into the Law of Moses after starting in grace and faith. To do this is foolish. To enter again is to "fall away". One must be somewhere to fall away. To start in grace and all of a sudden try to be justified by works of a dead system is to be a part of the falling away. So don't fall away! (*Galatians 3:1-5, 5:1-4*)

You must know those who labor among you. There are wolves among us. These are false teachers taking you into bondage and further away from the truth. Beware of the dogs; do not be involved in their snares. Satan does not have to show up in Church on Sunday morning with a pitchfork and pointy tail. He has messengers who appear as angels of light on his behalf preaching and teaching a mixture of law and grace, the traditions of men and preaching another gospel which is no gospel at all. (*II Corinthians 11:14, Galatians 1:6-7 NIV*)

The blood of bulls, goats and lambs were temporary substitutes to cover our sins and earthly priests carried out all these ceremonial sacrifices. Jesus, our Lamb, died in our stead and brought a better covenant based on better promises with a superior priesthood. Once and for all, Jesus completed and fulfilled the Old Covenant for all of us. All requirements were met and completed totally! This made a new and better way for us. There was no salvation in the Mosaic Law, only physical blessings for a physical nation and curses for those who failed to keep it. Jesus became a curse for us. It is finished! The Old Covenant is no more.

We who are saved by the blood of Christ are now able to love God and man properly thus fulfilling all the law because we have now been given a new nature and heart. We've been redeemed, been made new creatures in Christ and have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. The laws are all in our hearts and the Holy Spirit is now guiding us into obedience to God. (*Romans 5:5, 13:10, John 16:13, Hebrews 8:10-11*)

Days, ceremonies, new moons, Sabbaths and Jewish traditions cannot edify us as Christians. These were only a shadow of the things to come, not the reality of the good things that Christ has done for us under the New Covenant. They cannot supersede Christ, His higher law or the priesthood of the believer. The New Covenant is superior and based upon better promises:

**"But our High Priest has been given a ministry that is far superior to the ministry of those who serve under the old laws, for he is the one who guarantees for us a better covenant with God, based on better promises. If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it. But God himself found fault with the old one..."** (*Hebrews 8:6-8 NLT*)

The Lord made a way for those under the school master (the law) to be made right with God and it is through His all-sufficient sacrifice. We cannot establish our own righteousness through the law. Christ is the end of the law and He is now our righteousness. (*Romans 10:1-4*) His gift is free. (*Ephesians 2:8-9*) It is received by faith and not by works. (*Romans 4:13-16*) For someone to come to you and take you under the Jewish days and customs now that they have been fulfilled and abolished by Christ means that you have also been Judaized. Those that are trying to bring you back under the law are only trying to convert you to the works of Judaism, not to Christ and the works of the Holy Spirit.

We must beware of the Judaizers. The apostle Paul had to deal with them in his day as well. There were those who went behind him wherever he went and they tried to undo the work that he was doing. Those who persecuted Paul were of the circumcision group. (*Galatians 1:6-9, 2:11-12, 5:7-12, 6:12-13 NIV*) They were and still are blinded by the Law of Moses. They couldn't see the sacrifice of Christ as being all-sufficient to restore them from the fall in the Garden or to make them right before God.

Modern day Judaizers many times look to unconverted Jewish rabbis for knowledge about God. We cannot look to Judaism to learn about God though. Unconverted Jews are still waiting for the Lion of the tribe of Judah to come as a Conqueror, but they need to see and receive the Christ as the Lamb of God before they can receive the Lion. Then the Lion and Lamb can be side by side together because He is both! (*Isaiah 11:6 NASB*)

Behold the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world! So those who think that we need to connect to our Jewish roots, beware. Don't be deceived into a great falling away from Christ and the gospel of grace. Do not put Christ's sacrifice to open shame by mixing the Law of Moses with grace. (*Hebrews 2:1-4, 6:4-6*) It's another gospel, which is not a gospel at all. These end-times are perilous times. Remember your first love, Christ. Remember the simplicity of God's grace that saved you from the curse of the law. You cannot add anything to His complete sacrifice or His free gift. Beware of the dogs!